

CLAIMS:

1. A method for facilitating commercial exchange of digital media comprising the steps of:

assigning a unique owner identifier to the digital media;

assigning a unique identifier to the digital media;

providing a central media database containing a list of the owner identifiers and unique digital media identifiers;

providing an exchange interface configured to facilitate an exchange of a digital media in a commercial transaction;

transferring, through said exchange interface, a payment from a buyer to a seller upon verification of an authorized sale of said digital media;

transferring, through said exchange interface, a royalty payment to an owner associated with said authorized sale of digital media; and

distributing, through said exchange interface, a copy of said digital media from said central media database to said buyer.

2. The method of Claim 1 further including the step of assigning a type-code to the digital media to identify the type of work.

3. The method of Claim 1 wherein said authorized sale of said digital media is a sale of a physical media storing a copy of said digital media.

4. The method of Claim 1 wherein said authorized sale of said digital media is a sale between a previous buyer of said digital media and a subsequent buyer.

5. The method of Claim 1 wherein said authorized sale of said digital media is a sale of an authorized copy of said digital media between an authorized commercial reseller and a buyer of said digital media.

6. The method of Claim 1 wherein said authorized sale of said digital media is a referral sale of an authorized copy of said digital media

- 20 -

between an authorized seller and a buyer of said digital media, facilitated by an referring party; and

further including the step of transferring, through said exchange interface, a referral payment to said referring party.

7. A method for facilitating commercial exchange of digital medial files accessible on a peer-to-peer network comprising the steps of:

providing a central media database containing a list of digital media master files, unique digital media file identifiers, associated owner identifiers, and associated copyright owner identifiers;

maintaining a searchable index of digital media files offered for sale by members of the peer-to-peer network;

searching said index to identify a digital media file desired for purchase by a buyer;

providing an exchange interface configured to facilitate exchange digital media identified in said searchable index and stored in said central media database;

transferring, through said exchange interface, a payment from a buyer to a seller on said peer-to-peer network upon verification of an authorized sale of a digital media file located with said exchange interface;

transferring, through said exchange interface, a royalty payment to an owner associated with said authorized sale of digital media; and

distributing a copy of said digital media to said buyer from said central media database.